

I am AGAINST the changes in these rules. It will limit the availability for small businesses to compete due to the limitations on available advertising space. If a company owns the local newspaper and then purchases the main source of inexpensive television advertising, rates will skyrocket for both. This will then lead to higher rates throughout the local market. As rates increase competition decreases. We have seen this here in Denver when the Denver post and Rocky Mountain News combined their business divisions. Subscriptions went up tenfold and ad rates (although initially were up 1000%) are now five times what they cost before. In the industry I am in, flyfishing materials and supplies, I hardly see a single ad any more in the two main local newspapers after their merger. In the pre-merger days the back page of the wednesday Post was the fishing section of the week. There would be several ads for local fishing shops and/or tiny resorts catering to this industry. There would be a small space for an article or two about local fishing activity. Now that the ad rates are so high there hasn't been a single ad on that page for over a year. Local businesspeople have lamented about how much their business is off, but even then they can't justify the cost because the huge cost of advertising is greater then the cost of lost business. Several shops have had to shut there doors, two in my neighborhood alone. Both pointed to the cost to advertise locally as the reason for their closure.

This may help competition in the few mega-media company world, but the airwaves belong to the people and we aren't mega-anything. We are the millions of small businesses that will be hurt by these changes.